

Friends of Silence

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“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?”

Dear Friends ~ Warmth sweeps across the globe in its own time, as does the cold. Wet or dry spells make their ecological homes, then ebb away. As I greet you, dear readers, February is inviting winter in all its glory, despite its chilly inconveniences. It's a time to draw in close to the fire, to snuggle up with a good book, or brave the elements, swooping down the slopes, gliding across the ice, building a perfect snow man or woman with young loved ones, or admiring the beauty of transformed terrain.



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In lockstep, another thermometer robs us of any semblance of warmth: wars, school shootings, fear, political wrangling, dangerous gangs, rudeness, and emotional coldness seep slowly into old-fashioned neighborly warmth. Let us pray that sacred warmth will infuse our hearts and hearts across the world.

Whether your neighborhood is facing the winter elements or exploring an avalanche of enduring joys, or being challenged in any way, know that we are with you. We invite you into loving kindness and healing silence, and encourage you to spread warmth daily. We pray that warmth will infuse our hearts, our neighborhoods and nations, near and far. ~ Mary Ann



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What is one to do with such moments, such memories, but cherish them? Who knows what is beyond the known? And if you think that any day the secret of light might come, would you not keep the house of your mind ready? Would you not cleanse your study of all that is cheap, or trivial? Would you not live in continual hope, and pleasure, and excitement?

~ Mary Oliver in *WINTER HOURS: PROSE, PROSE POEMS, AND POEMS*

No winter lasts forever, no spring skips its turn.

~ Hal Borland

In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.

~ William Blake

In the depth of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer.

~ Albert Camus

Plants and animals don't fight the winter; they don't pretend it's not happening and attempt to carry on living the same lives that they lived in the summer. They prepare. They adapt. They perform extraordinary acts of metamorphosis to get them through. Winter is a time of withdrawing from the world, maximising scant resources, carrying out acts of brutal efficiency and vanishing from sight; but that's where the transformation occurs. Winter is not the death of the life cycle, but its crucible.

~ Katherine May in *WINTERING: THE POWER OF REST AND RETREAT IN DIFFICULT TIMES*

How many lessons of faith and beauty we should lose if there were no winter.

~ Thomas Wentworth Higginson

All the complicated details
of the attiring and
the disattiring are completed!
A liquid moon
moves gently among
the long branches.
Thus having prepared their buds
against a sure winter
the wise trees
stand sleeping in it.

~ William Carlos William, "Winter Trees"

in *SOUR GRAPES: A BOOK OF POEMS*

Keep me in the warm place of your heart where all the good dreams,
memories and duas (supplications) are stored.

~ Islamic Quotes: Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan*, 4:294



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Every winter has its spring.

~ H. Tuttle

It is better in prayer to have a heart
without words than to have words
without a heart.

~ Mohandas K. Gandhi

There is not a creature on earth but God provides its sustenance.

~ The Holy Qur'an 11:16

When it snows she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in
scarlet wool.

~ Proverbs 31:21

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it
bud and flourish so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater. So is my word that it goes out from my
mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

~ Isaiah 55:10



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Praise the Beloved, Heart of all hearts!

We are blessed as we sing praises

To the Beloved

For as we give ourselves in love,

So we receive love.

The Beloved abides in our heart,

In every open heart that

Welcomes Love...Yes, the Divine word

is written on every heart-scroll,

a guide to pilgrims along the way.

~ Nan Merrill, from her interpretation of "Psalm 147" in *PSALMS FOR PRAYING*

While snow fell carelessly
floating indifferent in eddies of
rooftop air, circling the black
chimney-cowls,
a spring night entered
my mind through the tight-closed window,
wearing
a loose Russian shirt of
light silk.

For this, then,

that slanting
line was left, that crack, the pane
never replaced.

~ Denise Levertov, "The Crack" in

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF DENISE LEVERTOV